ABSOLUTE

Election of Persons,

Not upon foreseen Conditions,

STATED and MAINTAINED;

In some Sermons preach'd at *Hartford*.

With some ANIMADVERSIONS on some Pelagian Passages in a Book, entituled, *Vulgar Errors in Divinity removed*, written by Mr. *Ralph Battell*, present Minister at *St. Alhallows* in *Hartford*.

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Rom. 11. 6. *If it be of Works, it is no more of Grace; if Grace, no more Works*, &c.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

THE Lord, who hath determined the Bounds of our Habitation, *Act.* 17. 26. having cast my Lot at *Hartford*, where I have continued in the Ministry of the Gospel above twenty Years, yet not without Interruption; and having, from the time of my Conversion, received in the Doctrine of Election much sweet and pleasant Comfort to my Soul, (in the Church of *England*'s Phrase is, speaking of it in the 17th Article) I have been a constant Preacher of it, and not without various Effects to several Hearers; it hath been (as the Apostles speak of their Doctrine) 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. *A Savour of Life unto Life, to others a Savour of Death unto Death.* Some that at first through Novelty stumbled at it through Ignorance, now rejoice to hear it preached: Others have so stumbled at it through Ignorance, Conceitedness and Prejudice, that to this day they have not recovered themselves. Some forsook our Meetings and turned Quakers upon hearing of this Doctrine, tho now *George Keith* (a chief Preacher among them) owns the Doctrine of Election of a definite Number of Persons that shall infallibly be saved. The Church of England Professors in *Hartford* are (as far as I can learn) most what prejudiced against it, tho it is owned so plainly in their Articles of Religion; and no wonder when one of their Teachers is such an Enemy to it, witness his slender Book, entituled, *Vulgar Errors in Divinity removed*, printed 1683. wherein he doth with Bullets of Glass batter the Brazen Mountains of the absolute Decrees of the Supreme Soverain, *Esth.* 6. 1. *Who giveth not an account of any of his matters*; Job 33. 13. but this Man impudently disputes with God, contrary to that in *Rom.* 9. 20. and arraigns his Creator, saying, Why hast thou made me thus? and yet *P.* 8. confesseth God might have made him, as to his Temporal Being, a Dog, a Hog, or poisonous Serpent; and beclouds himself, and undextly in his Preface saith, If his Superiours think he is in an Error, he will disown it. I am confident the late Reverend Bishop *Barlow* of *Lincoln* would have branded the Book (had he read it) as fulsome Pelagianism. In the fifth Page he writes; And what he saith to *Moses* is most equal, *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy*: Thanks be to the Gentleman for that ingenuous Judgment upon *Jehovah*'s Dealings. But now hear his own Comment; (that is) It belongs to me to appoint upon what Terms

Terms I will shew Mercy, and justify Men, whether by the Law of Faith, or by Works. For as he that builds an Hospital, hath an equitable Right to appoint the Qualifications of the Persons that shall partake in his Gift, whether poor Children, or Widows, aged Persons, or the like: so it belongs to God to appoint upon what Terms he will justify Men, (it should be Elect, for of that he is treating) whether by the Law of Works, or Faith. It is evident by this, that the Author is for Election upon Conditional Terms and Qualifications; and that it is a vulgar Error, *viz.* Free Election of Persons unto Qualifications. The Phrase [shewing Mercy] in this Paragraph can be no otherwise interpreted but of Election, tho he adds the word [justify] to it. Foreseen Faith, according to this Author, is the Cause of God's Election; and that Faith must surely be accompanied all a Man's days with good Works, else it is not true Faith: so that Election is upon Works as much as Faith; and there is no Election but at the utmost Period of a Man's Life. Against this Arminian Vulgar Error do I militate in the following Sheets, wherein the Reader will, I question not, find sufficient Armoury against it. As for absolute Reprobation, no wonder the Author is against that, whenas he is against absolute Election: But that God of his own Will and Pleasure, and for no other Cause, should decree to damn any, (which this Author upbraids us withal) was never asserted by any Divines that ever I read; but they constantly, *una Ore*, affirm, That God hath from Eternity determined to condemn Man for Sin, persisting therein to the end of his days in Unbelief. 2. They are all in one Mind, That no Man, whoever, but sins freely when he sins, notwithstanding the Decree to permit Sin. Now it is no Injustice in God to condemn Man for final sinning and Impenitency therein, nor to decree so to do from Eternity; tho withal we say, the desert of Sin is not the Cause of the Purpose and Decree it self. And let them quarrel with us for that, *Thomas Aquinas* (a great School-man) shall answer for us, long since he writ, *viz.* "He is mad that saith, there can be any Cause of "the Divine Will; that which is in Time, cannot be the Cause of that which is "eternal; the Cause must exist before the Effect. The foresight of the future Sin of Man in time, before it hath Existence, cannot have a causal Influence upon the eternal Will of God. Neither can God foresee any thing future, before he had will'd it to be. There could have been no Evil in the World if he had not decreed to permit it. That the Decree of Damnation should precede the Decree of permitting Sin, our Divines do not say; but one of them saith, This is the Order which God takes in his Decrees: (Dr. *Twiss* in his Answer to *Hoard*, Book 2. *p.* 30.) God at once decrees both to create Men, and suffer them to fall in *Adam*, and to bring them forth in their several Generations into the World, and to bestow the Grace of Faith and Repentance upon one sort, and so to save them, and to deny the same Grace unto others, permitting them to go on finally in their sinful Courses, and so to condemn them for Sin; and all to manifest the Glory of Mercy in one, and the Glory of Justice on the other, yea, and his Soveraignty too: But wherein? not in rewarding the one with Salvation, and inflicting Damnation on the other, but only in giving Grace to the one, and not to the other. What fault can be found in this Order of God's Decrees? Why should this Author exclaim and say, that we make God to ruine the Innocent, and make him like the Devil, *Pag.* 8. to be a Murderer from the beginning. These are but old cankered Pelagian Cavils against the Cause of God, that *will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, and whom he will he hardens, and yet is righteous. How do we make God to ruin the Innocent, whenas we heartily declare, that God never determined to ruin any but for Sin, and never did execute his Will and Determination, and so actually ruin any but for Sin contumaciously continued in to the end? And is this to ruin the Innocent? When the Decree was made, Man was neither

nocent

nocent nor innocent; for the Creature had no Existence before the Creation, nothing had a Being but the Decree; and so that of Reprobation had a Being before the World was. The Nature of God he saith cannot come so nigh the Nature of the Devil, as to be a Murderer from the beginning; intimating that by our Doctrine we make God to be like Satan, a Murderer from the beginning. But I doubt not but this Author will by this Crimination make himself like Satan, a Liar, and false Accuser of the Brethren; *Ad triarios ventum est*, Cannot we defend our selves? Satan was the moral Cause of *Eve's* sinning, and so of Destruction. Did we ever say that God was the moral Cause of *Eve's* sinning? I row not: And then how can he be said to be the Murderer? He that is not *Causa Causæ*, how can he be said to be *Causa causati?* Is the Judg that passes Sentence upon a Criminal, a Murderer; or the Sheriff that executes the Sentence? We profess constantly, steadily, that God never did sentence any to Death, but for final Sin; (we are speaking of the Adult) neither did he decree any to Hell, but for final Impenitency in Sin; much less doth he execute any, inflict Death eternal upon them, but for persevering obstinately in Sin to the end of their days without Repentance. And to say that the Judg of the Earth in executing Judgment upon Sinners, is to make him like the Devil, is *Monstrum horrendum!* &c. This is all that can be laid to our Charge, that God denies Faith and Repentance to some, which he gives to others, and hath decreed so of his meer Will and Pleasure, according to that in the 9th of the *Romans*, *He will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will be hardens*; not by infusing any Hardness into any, but by not infusing Grace. Is this to make God like Satan, a Murderer? Is Satan Sovereign Lord? Hath he Power over the Creature, as the Potter over the Clay? But this Man doth apprehend God to be like Satan, a Murderer, because he wills to punish some for their Sin persisted in, and because he will not give Faith and Repentance to all: Who can think but he is for universal Salvation? The Adversaries do much insist upon this Theam, crying out, that we render God cruel in this Point of absolute Reprobation: One of them hath this strain, 'Tis contrary to sound Reason, which cannot but argue such a Decree of extreme Cruelty, *&c.* But doth not sound Reason also argue the Prescience of God of as extreme Cruelty as this Doctrine of Reprobation? and they cannot, without offering Violence to the Light of Nature, deny the Fore-knowledg of God: and whatever Absurdity they would fasten upon us from our Tenet of absolute Reprobation, shall necessarily divolve upon themselves in every respect, if they preserve but the undeniable Doctrine of God's Prescience.

Another vulgar Error is concerning Free-will in Mr. *Battell's* Book: why he should call the Calvinistical Tenets vulgar Errors is uncouth, whenas the Pelagian Heresy sutes the Reason and Affections of all natural Men, and is very plausible to the common People. There is Popery and Pelagianism in every ones Belly by Nature; whole Towns and Countries espouse this Harlot, and wonder after her: but strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way of Truth, and few find it. I have read over the Treatise of Free-will, and find nothing but what is in Cardinal *Bellarmine* the Jesuit. The Author describes Free-will in the same Terms with the Jesuit; but how well does he agree with his Mother, the Church of *England?* hath he not undoubtedly spit in her Face, while he contentedly sits in her Lap, and sucks her Breasts? Did he ever subscribe or swear to the tenth Article of Free-will; is it not diametrically opposite to his Book? Let the Reader judg. "The Condition of Man "after the Fall is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself (mark that) by his own "natural Strength and good Works to Faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no "Power to do good Works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the Grace of God by "Christ [preventing us] (Mark that!) that we may have a good Will. But the Import of all his Treatise is, *viz.* That there is a Free-will in fallen Man to spiritual and supernatural

natural Acts, also indeed he calls it a remote Free-will to supernatural Acts; that this Will of Man is not subject to the special Motion of God in the Act of Conversion, so that the Grace of God is irresistably powerful, p. 73. This, as the Opinion of our Divines, he disputes against; that this Will is ready, tho with some Remoteness, to act with God's Grace, and is as bent to chuse Good as to refuse and chuse Evil, is not dead, but sick and lame; and this Power waits for God's Power, that they may act evenly and jointly in the working out of Salvation, pag. 81. And that Man's Will together with the Grace of God, casts the Scale in Conversion; not to wrong him, he saith, Grace hath the chiefest Stroke in it, pag. 91. But which of them moveth first, he saith not, and surely the first Mover hath the greatest Stroke. Now *Bradwardine* asserts God to be the first Mover in all Actions, and it's most consonant to right Reason; and if in all, then surely in good Actions. He hath, it's true, mentioned preventing Grace: In pag. 77. he is there setting forth the difference betwixt one dead naturally, and one spiritually dead; and the first difference is this, viz. The one is capable of preventing Grace, and the other is not: but is not he that is naturally dead as capable of the miraculous preventing Power of God, in raising him up from that kind of Death to Life, as he that is spiritually dead is capable of Grace preventing to convert him? And must not this Grace as really go before Conversion, in Order of Nature at least, as the other miraculous Power precedes the Resurrection, or quickening of him that is naturally dead: He saith one may be raised by Means, the other only by Miracles; we query what those Means are? External only, or Internal? (*i. e.*) infusing of spiritual Life as a Principle, and is not this a Miracle? *Joh.* 5. 24. compared with 28. there you plainly perceive, there is as much Power exerted in raising the spiritually as the naturally dead; but the Author supposeth external Means only, according to that he writes, p. 79. Efficacious Grace is nothing but Perswasion, which doth not determine the Will: This is noisom Pelagianism.

X Our Opinion is plainly this, and we have Boldness in the Truth, *viz.* In our Conversion Free-will is neither a total or partial Cause, pre-operant or co-operant, but the passive Subject, recipient of that *Vim Gratiæ vertendam* (as *Austin* called it) the changing Power of Grace. The Will in Conversion is neither a free Agent, nor natural Agent, but an obedient Subject of the efficacious Grace of God: This we are ready to maintain. All the Author's Arguments are in *Bellarmin*, *Pelagius*, *Arminius*, and fully answered by *Bradwardine*, *Twiss*, *Ames*, and *Davenant*, a Bishop of the Church of *England*. Is't not pity that this Dish of twice sodden Coleworts should be made ready and set on the Table for the poisoning of so many Souls, making them lazy, proud and hypocritical? Without an Answer κατὰ πόδας, to lay open the Fallacies and Absurdities of this vulgar Error, it may be done in season. In the Interim I offer a few things to manifest the Absurdities of this Tenet, *viz.* The Power of Free-will co-operating with the Grace of God, being a Partner with God in Conversion. First, See what *Bellarmine* saith of this matter. "The Concourse of God doth not impress or work any thing "upon our Wills, but immediately flows upon the Effects; it is like to that of two carrying a great Stone, which one of them singly cannot do; the Will and God work "together in one and the same moment of time, (but now mark, the Author will not "speak out so plainly, but I suppose will not oppose the Cardinal) yet God works be"cause the Will works; not on the contrary, *i. e.* the Will works because God works, "because he did as it were oblige himself freely of his own accord when he created "Free-will. Now this is ingeniously spoken. Against this we offer: 1. This takes off from the Dominion of Providence, and the efficacious Government of all the Operations of Human Will. 2. This takes away the Subordination of Second Causes to the First in their Operations. 3. This makes Man not God's Subject, but Companion;

nor

not subordinate, but equal to God. 4. It makes the Gubernation and Directions of Human Actions, and of whatsoever follows thereupon, first and chiefly to depend upon Man's Free-will. 5. It paints out God depending upon the nod and beck of Man in things of the highest Concernment. 6. This Opinion inverts and subverts that Piety which God hath taught us in the Scripture, *James* 4. 15. which we should use our selves to in our Resolves, *viz.* If the Lord will, we will do this or that; if Man will, to do this or that. 7. It is against not only *Aristotle*, *Augustine*, *Aquinas*, and the *Thomists* and *Jansenists*, but the very *Trent*-Roman-Catechism, *Art.* 8. *Symb. n.* 22. *Deus Providentiâ suâ quæ moveatur & agunt aliquid, intimâ virtute ad Motum atq; Actionem impellit.* God by his Providence doth impel with most intimate Power to Motion and Action all things that are moved, and act any thing. I cannot forbear adding as to the Description of Grace, *p.* 72. It is Strength and Assistance from God to do something above Nature; these Men think it enough when they speak or write of God's Actings of us, to grant that he aids, strengthens, assists, helps us. *Bellarmine* argues thus, "The "Scripture teacheth that we are helped of God in our Actions, but he that doth no-"thing cannot properly be said to be holpen, but he who labours in acting: yet I remember that Christ healing the possessed, casting out the Devils, in which Men were meerly passive, is called helping, *Mat.* 15. 25. *Mark* 9. 22. Have Compassion and help us. *Lactantius* long since did very well answer this of *Bellarmine*. The Propriety of this word [*juvare*] help, doth not hold forth to us Divine, but only Human Help: For *Cicero* interprets *Jove* and *Juno* to be called so from the word *juvando*, to help; and *Jupiter* is called so, *Juvans Pater*, the helping Father, which Name doth not in the least sute God; because to help belongs to Man, bestowing something upon one that hath but little: none doth so pray to God that he should help them, but save them; that he would bestow Life and Salvation upon them, which is much more than to help. And because we speak of a Father, no Father is said to help his Sons when he begets them, and brings them up; this word is too light, than that the Greatness of a Father's Bounty should be expressed by it: How much more is it inconvenient and unbecoming God, who is most truly our Father, by whom we are, whose we wholly are, by whom we were made, quickened, inlightened? *&c.* He doth not understand the Divine Benefits, that thinks himself only to be helped of God. Therefore he is not only ignorant, but wicked, that by the word *Jove*, doth impare, diminish, or lessen the Power of the Highest.

Now hear a few Queries that should be resolved by these Levellers, Co-operators, Coadjutors. 1. Whether the Grace of Calling, or the whole Work of God which he exerts to the converting of a Man, be only moral, only in perswading, proposing, inviting, exhorting, *&c.* or also real and of proper Efficacy? 2. Whether there be no Action of the Spirit acting immediately upon the Mind and Will, which causeth us to believe; but the proposing only of the things to be believed, doth suffice to the begetting and bringing forth of Faith? 3. Whether there be not the same manner of working as to the Efficacy of Grace in the quickening of the Intellect, Affections and Will; the Intellect and Affections being quickened in an irresistable, but the Will in a resistable manner? 4. Whether any other Powers are given to the Will to its Conversion, besides the inlightening the Mind, and the exciting the Affections? 5. Whether besides the inlightening the Mind, and the exciting the Affections, Grace works any thing by way of Principle, or antecedently unto Conversion; but only accompanieth the Will already consenting? 6. Whether there being all the Workings and Operations which God useth in the effecting Conversion in Men, whether Conversion doth not always follow? 7. When Conversion follows, whether doth it follow and is effected by any Necessity of the Cause, or Infallibility of the Event from the Intention and Action of God,

God, or only contingently and uncertainly, as is pleased the indifferent Will of Man to incline it self? Let these Queries be plainly answered.

A third vulgar Error is, *viz.* That Christ died for the Elect only, he is for universal Redemption: Now this vulgar Error the Church of *England* is for with us, for they are for the Election of Persons, witness their 17*th* Article; and it's evident that these two Opinions are inconsistent, *viz.* Election and universal Redemption. As for those universal Terms he saith, *p.* 101. the Church teacheth the Children in their Catechisms to answer, *viz. I believe in God the Son, who redeemed me and [all Mankind]*: And that in her Collect for Good-friday, she prays for the Conversion of Jews, Turks and Infidels. Indeed according to this Author's Opinion, there needs no Prayer be made for them that have Power already in their own Hands. God works in Conversion, because the Will wicks, saith *Bellarmine*; but we answer, by querying, Whether we should judg of the Church's Doctrine by her Collect, and Catechism, or by her Articles of Religion? surely by this latter. Again, Are we to pray for Turks, Jews and Infidels Conversion, without this addition (if it be the Will of God to convert them)? I think not. This Term [all Mankind] so general, no more is signified thereby, than Christ died for Mankind, in Opposition to Angels kind, and we say the same. The ground for praying for Turks, Jews and Infidels, ariseth from the Scripture prophesying of the Jews Conversion, and bringing in of the Fulness of the Gentiles; which is plainly notified in the 11*th* of the *Romans*. But that Christ died for all and every one, with his own and Father's Intent to save them, we deny; and offer those Arguments drawn up lately by that Learned and Reverend Brother, Mr. *Isaac Chauncy*, in his late Book, entituled, *The Doctrine which is according to Godliness*, there cannot be better Arguments produced. The Preface swells, else I would have transcribed them all; take but one suitable to the following Subject, and I will bid the Reader farewel.

" It is not fit Christ should die for all, seeing his Father elected not all, and gave
" not all to him: For Christ to redeem more, were to disobey his Father's Will, and
" not to do it. If any say God elected all, it is most absurd to talk of chusing some
" from among many others: when a Man takes the whole Number, this is no Election.
" Or if any say Election is conditional provided if a Man will, this also is no Election;
" for if Election be upon the Condition of Man's Free-will, neither one nor another
" is chosen, but all have equal previous Designation to the end, and so there is no
" Election at all. *Farewel,*

EPHES. I. 5.

Having predeſtinated [us] to the Adoption, &c.

THis Text ſpeaks this Truth, *viz.* That particular Perſons are decreed unto Eternal Life, and the Means thereof are decreed in their effectual working: Some ſingular Perſons are the immediate Objects of Election, the word [*us*] denotes it; it ſpeaks Perſons ſtill: All the Adverſaries grant Perſons are elected, but here is the difference; ſome think that Perſons are in God's Eye firſt, and his Love was firſt caſt upon them as ſoon as he thought of glorifying himſelf out of himſelf among the Sons of Men: and whatever Means (ſome calls them Conditions) by which they may come to this Salvation, they are choſen to, they ſhall have Strength from God to perform.

The other think that Perſons are elected, but out of fore-ſight that they do fulfil ſuch Conditions, and thoſe Conditions are firſt of all ordained, and Perſons ſo far as they come under them. Some of them ſay, that the Object of Election is Man dying, paſt the uſe of Reaſon, who in all probability will not return and live to enjoy the Means wherein they may uſe the Power of their Will, to take or leave. Some will ſay a Man is not elected while he is a Man of this World.

Therefore this Order they that are of this Opinion make of God's Decrees. 1. God decrees to ſend his Son into the World, that he dying his Juſtice might be ſatisfied, he might be free upon what Terms he would ſave Men. The ſecond Decree, that Men ſhall have no other Terms for Salvation, but Perſeverance in believing on him who hath died for them. Third Decree, to give fit Means to make them believe. 4. God picks out particular Perſons as his choſen ones, as they fulfil the Conditions at the Point of Death. Or thus; God conſidered all the ways poſſible that may bring to Salvation, and of all pitch'd upon the way of Faith; this they call Predeſtination unto Life. 2. Then there is a particular Decree of this Man or the other to Life, according as he hath fulfilled that Condition. By what hath been ſaid, you may ſee the difference.

This is not God's Election, to ſay, if Men believe and perſevere in believing, then they ſhall be elected and ſaved, then I will pitch upon you rather than others to Life: but this is God's Election, I do take thee, and therefore will enable thee and not others to do all the things I require of

thee; I will call thee, and I will not depart from thee till thou art partaker of Eternal Life; the Queſtion then is great about the Cauſe of God's Election, what makes a compleat Act of God's electing? God chuſes particular ſingular Perſons, *John*, *Peter*, *Paul*, theſe are thoſe God immediately pitcheth upon, not Conditions firſt and then Perſons, as they fall under theſe; but Perſons firſt, and appoints them to all the Means: I prove this, 1. By Scripture. 2. By Reaſon. 3. I will ſhow the danger of the other Opinion.

The Scripture ſaith, that the *very Hairs of our Head are numbred*, Mat. 10. 30. *Acts* 27. 34. not one falls without your Heavenly Father: 2 *Sam.* 14. 11. Much more ſurely hath God a Care of all the Heirs of Salvation, of all that ſhall be made partakers of that Inheritance in Glory: things that are numbred are that they may not periſh. If ſuperfluous things are taken care of by the Providence of God, and it reaches to minute things, as Hairs of the Head, doth it not extend, think you, to the Perſons of them that are ſaved?

The Proofs of Scripture for this are three.

1. That the Scripture is ſilent about any ſuch way as the Adverſaries ſpeak of; now the Scripture is the Light that is given to know the Mind of God by in this matter: The Silence of the Scripture in this thing ſpeaks aloud, what it ſaith nothing of is not to be believed. For in this lieth the very Nature and Eſſence of a Rule, that what is not according to it is not right, nor authentick, not to be ſuppoſed; in the Scripture are all the Truths that are to be received, and view it throughout, and there is not a word of this, *viz.* That there are Conditions made of Election if we believe, and repent, and perſevere; indeed of Salvation there are Conditions the Scripture ſpeaks of, taking Conditions in a general ſenſe, as they ſignify Means to a thing, or a Connexion betwixt one thing and another: but Salvation is much differing from Election, as much as the Effect from the Cauſe, and the End from the Means; we are ſaved by Grace therefore in the uſe of Means, but Election gives that Grace: Some Scriptures ſeem to be for them, but of them I ſhall ſpeak afterwards.

2. The Scripture ſpeaks of particular Perſons, ſingular Perſons elected, where-ever it ſpeaks of Election or Predeſtination; in this of the firſt of the *Epheſians*, *predeſtinated* [*us*], *i.e.* the *Epheſians*, in diſtinction from others. In the ſecond Chapter he ſaith, *they were Children of Wrath by Nature as others*, till God made known his Purpoſe to them by calling of them: It muſt have been inſtead of this word [us] (all Men) predeſtinated all Men to the Adoption of Children; now according to them we are no otherwiſe adopted to be Sons, but as we our ſelves by our well-doing make our ſelves Sons: We are elected after we have perſevered in Faith and well-doing to the end. *Rom.* 8. 39. [Whom] *he hath predeſtinated*; are not theſe Perſons ſpoke of? the *Romans* in diſtinction from others, when the Apoſtle ſaith in the 28*th* Verſe,

Verſe, *All things work together for good, to them that are the called according to his purpoſe:* here is a Purpoſe of God ſpoke of that hath determined ſome Perſons, that they ſhall receive Profit and Good by all Afflictions that ſhall befal them; there it cannot be (as they would have it) ſpoke of all Men. Acts 13. 48. *As many as were ordained unto Eternal Life, believed:* This Scripture ſpeaks of Ordination unto Eternal Life, ſomething that was done before believing; no Man can diſpoſe himſelf (as ſome would have the word τεταγμένοι read and underſtood) for Eternal Life before Faith, this ordaining to Eternal Life is an Act of God, not any Act of ours, and it is ſpoken of Perſons in diſtinction from others: for the words are brought in to give a Reaſon why ſome Men did believe the Doctrine preached by *Paul*, and others contradicted; they that were ordained there believed the Doctrine, as Chriſt ſaith in another place, *Joh.* 10. 26. *Ye believe not becauſe you are not of my Sheep.* None can believe but thoſe that are elected, *Rom.* 9. 18. *He hath Mercy on whom he will*; this having Mercy is God's Election unto Eternal Life, making a Man a Veſſel of Mercy; now are not here Perſons ſpoke of? To put it out of doubt there are Perſons named in the 9th of the *Romans*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*; now he ſpeaks of them not as Perſons who came to their Eſtate of Election through any Conditions; for he ſaith they were elected before they had done any good.

Object. They will ſay theſe two were only Types of ſuch a ſort of Men as are elected upon Faith, not Works. *Anſw.* They were not only Types, but they are Examples alſo: The Conception of *Iſaac* was not typically only, but a thing that was done; ſo alſo is the difference that God put between him and *Iſhmael* at his Conception, and the declaring of his Love concerning him: but if they were Types only, which is not ſo, (for it was verified as to their own Perſons being elected) yet not of ſuch as upon believing come to be elected; for God it's ſaid loved *Jacob* before he had *done any good*, ſo that he was not conſidered by the Lord as one that did believe, or was to believe and ſeek Salvation by Chriſt in the way of Faith, and not for his Works; for then he ſhould be conſidered as one who had exerciſed Faith, which the Scripture denieth.

Rom. 9. that Similitude of the Potter ſhews that God makes a diſtinction of Perſons: *The Potter of the ſame Matter forms one Veſſel to Honour, another to Diſhonour*; ſo God makes one Perſon to be an elect Perſon, and therefore puts him into an Eſtate differing from all others which are not ſo: *Rom.* 11. 7. *the Election* (*i. e.* Perſons elected) *have obtained it, the reſt were hardened*; what were thoſe *reſt* but Perſons? thoſe that are elected they are ſuch Perſons as are ſevered and plucked out from the reſt.

3. The Scripture that ſpeaks of Election ſpeaks alſo of Means, and tells us we are ordained to all Means which lead unto Eternal Life: Whatever are the Condition or Conditions of Salvation, we are elected to the

fulfilling of them: Election carries with it a Power to enable us to fulfil what is required of us, as well as signifies the Love of God who by the Means will give Eternal Life. Ephes. 1. 3. *Who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in Heavenly Places in Christ*; if with all, then with Faith and Perseverance, for they are Blessings and spiritual ones: then are they given to us in Christ, chosen in him the Head; *ver.* 4. *chosen that we should be holy and without Blame*: why then we have Holiness by Election, *Ephes.* 5. 25, 26, 27. Christ gave himself for the Church: Now this giving of himself an Offering it was according to the Will of God, *Gal.* 1. 4. which Will of God is Election. Now wherefore was it? *that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water, by the Word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without Blemish.* So then if so be that the Persons that be elected be distinguished from others in that Act, then God doth not first chuse a Condition, because in that they are alike with others. Again, if so be God do undertake the Condition, then Election lieth not upon their fulfilling of it.

Thus much from the plain Scripture it self: now, secondly, Reasons and Arguments from the Scriptures that Persons are elected, not Conditions, or Persons upon Conditions, if they believe and repent, *&c.*

1. There is but one Election of Head and Members; now the electing of the Human Nature into Personal Union is the Pattern of God's electing us to have Communion with himself: the Human Nature of Christ was elected unto personal Union with the Divine, and unto Grace and Glory, *Mat.* 12. 18. Isa. 42. 1. *Mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth.* 1 Pet. 1. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World:* he speaks of the Human Nature of Christ, for he saith there, *he was manifested in these last Times.* Now the Human Nature of Christ was not chosen of God to be united upon any Condition, he required not the Human Nature to do any thing that it might be united; this is impossible, for the Human Nature of Christ had no Subsistence of it self out of the Divine, so then it could not do any Action; for then it must be a Person, and united before it was united, which is a Contradiction. God took the Human Nature into Union before it was in an Estate of doing any thing, or acting any thing: then the Argument lieth thus; so as the Head is elected, so are the Members; so as Christ is predestinated, so are all those which are considered by God the Father in him; but he was not predestinated, or came out to his Election by fulfilling of any Condition.

2. Reason. The Scripture doth plainly hold out, that Infants that die as soon as they be born, or those that die in the Womb, or before they come of Years, if any of them be saved, as who dare deny that, then they are elected: *of such* (the Scripture saith) *is the Kingdom of God*, he means such Children as

as were brought to him whom he bleſſed, Children of Diſciples that followed him and believed on him: *The Branches are holy*, Rom. 11. and in the ſame Chapter the Jews are ſaid to be be *beloved* with the Love of Election *for their Fathers ſake*: Children are elected, if any are ſaved, none are ſaved but the Elect; it's ſaid *Rom.* 11. 7. *the Election hath obtained it*; but now what Conditions did theſe Infants fulfil of obeying and perſevering, when as they were cut off before they were capable of doing any thing, or uſing any Means, and God had decreed and determined them unto Death in their Infancy? Remember now that elect Infants dying in Infancy make but one Body together with us of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved. Here are ſome elected without Conditions.

3. Reaſon. The Number of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved is certain, the Number can neither be increaſed or decreaſed, added to or taken from; there is a Book of Life ſpoke of in Scripture, *Rev.* 20. 15. it is a figurative Speech borrowed from Men, it ſignifies the unchangeable Purpoſe of God in giving Salvation to ſome: now as it is among Men, Names are written in Books, ſo the Names of them that ſhall be ſaved are in God's Mind and known to him, certain as if they were written in a Book; now this Book is ſo kept, that none that are written here can be blotted out, nor any written that are not already written from Eternity; therefore this is given as a Reaſon why ſome Men ſtood and perſevered in Apoſtatizing Times when others fell, it was this, their Names were written in this Book, (*i. e.*) God had choſen them, they muſt ſtand, their Names could not be blotted out: *Rev.* 13. 8. *All that dwell upon the Earth ſhall worſhip him, and whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World.* Rev. 21. *ult. None ſhall enter into the City new* Jeruſalem *but they that are written in the Lamb's Book of Life*; that Number written there, and none but that Number ſhall be ſaved: *Rev.* 20. 15. *And whoſoever was not found written in the Book, was caſt into the Lake of Fire:* All went to Hell but they, not any added to them, the Number is definite; *Mat.* 24. 24. it's ſaid, *if it were poſſible the very Elect:* But if it were upon Condition that Men are elected, this could not be; for theſe are tendered to all Men, and ſufficient Means to believe, and they have Power to believe or not, then the Number muſt increaſe or decreaſe as they believe or not, perſevere or fall off, to day there are more to morrow leſs, more again and leſs again, as Men will hold on or not; the Election of a definite certain Number to which not one can be added nor taken from, doth diametrically oppoſe the Election of Conditions, which all muſt be under equally, and no one ſeparated from the reſt.

4. If Election was upon Conditions, if we believe, and repent, and perſevere, then would he have given Means to all to have known theſe Conditions, elſe very little Love in God to ſet Terms upon which all Men may be ſaved, and yet not to let all Men know theſe Terms: now it is clear from Scripture,

Scripture, that none knows the way to Eternal Life, but thoſe that have the preaching of the Goſpel, or the reading of the Scripture: *Rom.* 1. 16. it's ſaid of the Goſpel *it is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believes, for therein is the Righteouſneſs of God revealed from Faith to Faith*; here is the Reaſon, he tells after what the Gentiles could attain to by their Helps, it was only to know there was a *Godhead full of Power and Wiſdom*, but they could not reach this, to underſtand the Righteouſneſs of God, and how the Juſt ſhould live by Faith, and depend upon another for Salvation, and receive the Righteouſneſs of God; 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. it's ſaid *the World by Wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe*: Acts 11. 18. *Then hath God alſo to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto Life.* This was when the Apoſtles came among them and preached to them; till then, notwithſtanding all their Helps, they were in Darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of Death.

5. To elect upon Conditions, is to turn the Grace of God into a Covenant of Works, and to put us into that Covenant: This makes a Covenant of Works, *viz.* That there is a Condition of Life given to us, and it lies upon our Hands to do it; we are to perform it be it what it will, if we are to do it for Life: the Condition to *Adam* was, Do this and live; but now it is, Believe and live: but it is all one as if he had ſaid, Do and live, in caſe that our Election depends upon it. The Article is changed only, or the Act to be done, but the Obligation and manner of Treaty is the ſame, it lies upon us to do it, otherwiſe we ſhall not have the Election of God or Salvation.

Object. But we have Faith given us. *Anſw.* This makes not a difference, this alters it not to ſay we have Power given us, or the Grace of Faith to believe; for ſo had *Adam* Power given him to do whatever God ſhould command or did command, this Power he had given him before he ſinned, all his Abilities were given him with his Being from God; ſo that they did not ariſe (as ſome think) I ſay his Abilities (whereby he was to walk upon Terms of Juſtice) did not ariſe from his natural Principle.

Thirdly; Now hear the Inconveniences that follow upon their Doctrine that ſeems ſo plauſible, if you believe and perſevere then God chuſes you, if you perform the Conditions; he elects them firſt, then Perſons as they fall under them.

1. This is againſt the Perfection of God; for to will upon a Condition is but an imperfect Act of the Will, it is but a Velleity, a wiſhing or woulding; becauſe whatever is willed upon a Condition, is willed disjunctively, either I will do, or I will not do it. Now to ſay God doth imperfectly will, is not becoming God, who can do what he will do, it only ſaves God's Credit however it falls out, but it ſutes not his Greatneſs and Goodneſs to wiſh a thing that is never accompliſhed.

2. It

2. It doth not ſute the Wiſdom of God to proceed from Generals to Specials: firſt he wills Conditions, and then Men as they fall under theſe Conditions, particular Perſons as they fulfil them. This argues Weakneſs in God's Knowledg, as if he knew not who they ſhould be before-hand.

3. It makes void all Election of Perſons: thus their Election runs, *viz.* He that believes ſhall be ſaved: what needs any more except God's Fidelity be ſuſpected? If a Prince ſhould ſay all Rebels that come in ſhall be pardoned, what need any more mentioning of Perſons, except you will not give Credit to the Prince? there needs no Act of Pardon to be granted when they do come in; all that do come in enjoy their Pardon, and it is not given them by any new Act except there be cauſe to ſuſpect the Prince's or Magiſtrate's Fidelity: There is no cauſe at all to ſuſpect that God will not keep his Word, and make it good; for he hath ſaid whoſoever believes ſhall be elected, there needs no Election of particular Perſons afterwards.

4. It will not ſute the Government of God to have his Will depend upon Man's frail fickle Will, and that in the higheſt Things that concern his Glory; to wait upon Man's Will, to lacky it after Man's Will, and be determined by it.

5. It's againſt the Nature of a Decree; the Decree of Election is a ſevering ſome from others, as it's ſaid in Scripture, *many are called* [*few*] *choſen*; Mat. 20. 16. *the Election obtains it, the* [*reſt*] *are hardened*, Rom. 11. See, here they are diſtinct from others; but now it belongs to all to be under a Condition, *viz.* if you believe.

6. This will follow upon it; then thoſe that are elected may be damned, and thoſe that are for the preſent Reprobate, and do not fulfil the Condition, may afterward fulfil the Condition, and be elected and ſaved; which is ridiculous, and clean contrary to the whole Current of Scripture.

7. If God chuſes Conditions, and not Perſons, until ſuch time as they fulfil thoſe Conditions, then Chriſt is made a King without a Kingdom, a Shepherd without a Flock, a Husband without a Spouſe, a Head without Members, a Saviour without a Body, a Prophet tho he reveals not God's Will to any, a Prieſt tho none be reconciled; for it is poſſible none of theſe Conditions may be fulfilled.

8. Yea, this ſuppoſeth a Power in Man as to his own Converſion, that it lies in him whether he will turn or no, be converted or not be converted, tho God hath done what is fitting for him, and tho he hath done what he can do, according to the Rule which he hath appointed to work by.

9. It ſuppoſeth a Falling from Grace.

10. It ſuppoſeth plainly Juſtification by Works: for if a Man is elected, if he continues in Faith and Obedience, then is he alſo juſtified by Works: The Conſequence is eaſy.

Object-

Object. 1. *John* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth ſhould not periſh*, &c. Now they form the Objection thus: there is a Love of God common to all the World, that upon Condition they do believe, they may be ſaved, therefore no difference of Perſons, only as they believe or not believe: This they ſay it proves, that God gives Chriſt for this End, that every one might be elected if he would believe.

1. The firſt Anſwer might be as to the word *World* here: it is the Elect of God, and this word is ſo uſed in other places: God was in Chriſt reconciling the [World] to himſelf; 2 *Cor.* 5. *John* 17. that the World may believe that thou haſt ſent me.

2. Doth not the Text ſpeak of our fallen Eſtate? for it ſpeaks of periſhing; but ſurely God did not then begin to elect when Man was fallen, no, the Fall of Man was decreed as a Means unto the Accompliſhment of the Election; what was done againſt the ſecond *Adam* Chriſt, was done by the determined Counſel of God, *Acts* 4. 28. ſo as to the firſt *Adam* all was decreed. God who is infinitely wiſe, and governs to accompliſh his own End, would not let Sin be in the World, but that he knew how to make Grace abound; thereby Grace began to appear at the Fall, broke out, was manifeſted thereby: but Grace was given us in Chriſt before the World began, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. therefore before God did conſider or think of any thing, or had any thing in his eye, of what was done in the World by us.

3. This Scripture tells you, that what God did he did out of Love; *God ſo loved the World:* Now this Love of God muſt either be natural Affection in him, or elſe it muſt be a Decree. Natural it was not, for then it muſt extend to all, to the Devil and his Angels as well as to Men: thoſe that conceive that there is naturally in God an Affection unto thoſe that are in Miſery, muſt needs conceive that Affection to be as well to the Devil and his Angels (which were in greater Miſery than Men), as well as unto Men themſelves: no it cannot be that, for thoſe Affections that are in Men are to be ruled by Reaſon and their Will; ſo are God's Affections likewiſe. So that the Love ſpoke of here, is God's Electing Love, Love in his Decree, Love with Choice.

4. *So loved:* It is the greateſt higheſt Love God could ſhow to us; nothing able to parallel it, nothing that can go beyond it: ſo it is ſaid, *Rom.* 5. 8. *God commendeth his Love to us in that Chriſt was ſent to die for us*; (i. e.) he could not have ſet out his Love more to us. *In this was manifeſted the Love of God to us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son that we might live through him*, 1 John 4. 9. This Love is made equal to that Love that he gave Eternal Life by, therefore it muſt be electing Love, the higheſt Love: now to elect upon Conditions, is not the higheſt Love; it's greater Love to elect without a Condition, than to elect after the Condition is fulfilled.

Object.

Obj. 2. If particular Persons be elected, then they shall certainly be saved; their Salvation is necessary; and if it be necessary, what need any Endeavours, what need Men use the Means who shall be saved, and it cannot be otherwise? but Election makes it necessary that those Persons be saved, and so takes away Endeavours: we may live as we list.

Answ. There is a double Necessity: 1*st*. Of Nature, as a Stone that goeth downward, and a Necessity of Compulsion when things are made to act against their own Nature, as Stones to move upwards, to ascend; this Necessity takes away all Endeavours. 2*d*. There is a Necessity of Infallibity, or Unchangeableness, and this stands with Freedom: As for Example; the Apostle *Paul* said, *he must go to* Jerusalem, *and yet he went freely. Christ ought to suffer*, it's said, *the things he was appointed to*; and yet he did suffer very freely, he laid down his Life very willingly. When things are ordained to some End, they are so ordained that that End shall certainly be accomplished. So when God saith we shall obtain eternal Life through Holiness, we shall be holy that we may attain thereunto. Look into Scripture, and ye shall find that notwithstanding the Salvation of the Saints hath been certain, this hath been so far from taking them off Endeavours, that it hath been as a great Weight upon the Wheel to make them very obedient; their Obedience and Holiness hath not been slackned at all, but increased by this, *viz.* that God hath taken so much care of them in his Election, that they should not come short of Glory, but certainly obtain it. *Paul* said, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect; and who shall condemn, and who shall separate?* Rom. 8. 33, 34. And yet who more diligent than he, abounding in Goodness, and stirring up others thereunto? his Spirit too big to be enticed with the Pleasures that are in Sin, to sin against the Grace that so much abounded towards him.

Use 1. If this be true, that there are Persons, particular Persons elected unto such Conditions, then do not say, because thou canst not find the Condition as yet, that thou art not in the Election: Election doth not depend upon the having of Faith. It is an Act of God, and it is manifested and declared when he makes thee believe; this is not the Method of God, Go and do thus much, and when you have done thus much, I will elect you and bring you to Glory; but this, I have passed the Sentence that you are mine, and shall be mine, and I will fill you with my Spirit, and enable you to Obedience, and bring you to Glory. But suppose we find it not so, we have no Faith, Holiness, Obedience, yet say not ye are not in the Election; for it depends not upon these things: They are not the Causes of it, and you may be in the Election for all that, tho you cannot know it but by Faith. You know *Paul* ran an ill Course in Sin, he persecuted the Saints, thought he ought to do so with Zeal; yet saith God, he is a *chosen Vessel* unto me, *Act.* 9. 15.

9. 15. yea he was in the Election then a People; said in Acts 18. 10. *I have much* [*People*] *in this City*. God calls them his People before Conversion; and in John 10. 16. *Other* [*Sheep*] *I have which are not of this Fold, them also I must bring*. They are called Sheep before they are brought in. And of the Jews it's said, that they were very refractory, would not receive the Gospel because the Gentiles did, thinking it a Breach of Promise, Rom. 11. 28. *As concerning the Gospel they are Enemies for your sake; but as touching the Election, they are beloved for the Father's sake*. Enemies, and yet beloved. Now say not, because thou hast nothing written in thy Heart, that therefore thy Name is not written in the Book of Life: thou hast no ground to exempt thy self, tho thou canst not know it till Faith come; thou canst not be worse than those Jews, to be angry with God because he is merciful to others: Who knows but God may yet give Faith to thee? if thou wert to bring Faith with thee, thou wert in an ill Case, on a splitting Rock; thou wouldst never get off: But seeing thou art to have Faith as an Effect of Election, it is the Gift of God, he gives it to the Persons he sets his Love upon; be silent then, conclude nothing against thy self.

Use II. Doth not Election depend upon Conditions to be fulfilled? then measure not God's Love to thee according to the Grace thou findest in thy self; judg not of his Purpose according to the Purpose thou hast of serving him. Without Faith we cannot know that we are chosen of God; but by a little we may come to know it. 1 Thess. 1. 4, 5. The Apostle he knew the Thessalonians *Election*, *because the Word came unto them in Power*, (*i. e.*) it did prevail with them, and overcome their Hearts: Yet they were but newly converted, and in divers Errors. Signs and Tokens are to be taken from the least Degrees of Grace. Altho then our Faith be low and scanty, we are not received according to the Measure of our Gifts, but according to his Purpose; his Purpose to do thee Good is compleat, tho yet thou hast but little Good in thee: *He worketh all things according to the Counsel of his own Will*, Ephes. 1. 11. *He worketh to will and to do of his own good Pleasure*, Phil. 2. He doth not work a Will, because we have had a Will before; he doth not give a better Will, because we had a good one before; but he gives the first good Will to them that had none before to any Spiritual Good: he gives a Will to do great things, *to work out their own Salvation*. If Election were upon Conditions of Grace, then you might measure God's Chusing of you, loving of you, to eternal Life; to be according to your Grace: there is this practical Error in us, or this Error in us practically, that we hang God's Electing Love upon Conditions: here is the Root and Bottom, and first Seed of many Doubts and Troubles to the Saints, that their Eyes are not only upon Qualifications as desirable, or the things they should labour after, but they are upon Qualifications as the Movers of God's first

first Love of Election; they think because of their Sin God will repent, and hath no purpose of any Good to them: this wrongs the Grace of God. When he took us at first, his Love was not for any thing he saw in us, or for any thing he knew would be in us: he was resolved to make us lovely, but he will so do it, as you shall acknowledg his free Love and Grace: Our Loveliness is not the cause of his Love, tho it makes you a suitable Object to his Love. And when his Love at first was pitched upon thee, what a Case wast thou in then? Ezek. 16. *Thou wast in thy Blood, cast out, loathsom, no Eye pitied thee.* When God did call thee to consider of eternal Life, thou wast minding nothing but Ways of eternal Death; *thou wast found of him when thou soughtest not after him.* Did God pitch his Love upon thee at first? he doth not alter in his Love; his Love is fixed on thy Person still: thou altereſt, but he changeth not: thou art the same Object for him to do Good to, tho thou art not the same (it may be) in regard of Disposition of Spirit. Consider but this, you that are in Christ; you are loved, not because you are fruitful, (as *Leah* thought, and said, *now will my Husband love me, Gen.* 29. 32.) We are not loved because we are beautiful, but loved that we may be holy; and this should make us cleanse our selves, and walk answerably to the Love of God: Judg thy self, condemn thy self for every Sin; but do not think God cannot be good, because thou art not good, for his Love is not upon Conditions.

Use III. If God hath given thee any Knowledg of thy Election, rejoice with exceeding Joy: So the Lord bad his Disciples above all things, *Rejoice that their Names were written in Heaven*, Luke 11. 20. The Elect are a peculiar People that he hath severed from all other; his Heart is to you in a singular Manner, as the Heart of a chaste Husband to his Spouse, forsaking Father and Mother, and all else in Comparison, in regard of that Relation. When the King picks out from the rest one for his Favourite, or one for a Pardon out of many Offenders, how should it rejoice his Heart that he had not only his Pardon, but the King's special Love? Know this for thy Comfort, thou shalt certainly be saved, the Love of God will be to thee, (as when we love the Person of any, our Love holds and continues) because upon thy Person. If a Man marries for an Estate, when Poverty comes, his Love his gone: if for Beauty, when Sickness comes to blast it, then no Love: but if Love be to the Person, Love holds as long as the Person holds. God hath pitched his Love on thy Person; therefore whatever hath been thy Hazard in the Way to eternal Life, it is all but suffered for this End, to make thee cleave to Christ, in whom thy Strength is, and to prize him and the Gospel the more. Thou shalt never come into Condemnation, tho thou may'st say God hath cast thee off, I am but Reprobate Silver: Why what is the matter? why I have done Evil so and so: why thy doing Good

ſo and ſo, was not the Cauſe of God's electing thee: thy doing Evil is displeaſing to him, but his Love was not pitched upon thy doing ſo and ſo. Well, neither doth it ceaſe when thou doſt ſo and ſo ill: but if thou doſt ſo, he will bring thee by Weeping-croſs, becauſe of his Love, unto that eternal Glory to which he appointed thee.

Uſe IV. That as to your Judgments ye would ſtand faſt in this Doctrine, *viz.* That God hath choſen Perſons, ſingular Perſons, and Means for them, and will enable them to perform thoſe Means, believe, repent, and perſevere, and bring them infallibly to Glory. Receive this, and ſtand faſt in it in this day, when it is ſo much ſpoke againſt every where.

The other Doctrine, as hath been ſaid before, caſts great contempt upon the Godhead.

1. To make God to be at the Will of the Creature, is a very bad thing. Now this is evident their Way, by Election upon Conditions; for according to them, God that is the firſt Cauſe, cannot determine of Love or Hatred, whether the Man ſhall be elected or reprobated, till ſuch time as the Creature hath tried, and ſo ſhewed whether he will chuſe and embrace the Means or not; he waits to ſee what the Creature will do before he determines any thing as to particular Perſons. It was ſo under the Law, that if a Child or Wife had made a Vow without the Father's or Husband's Conſent, it was null and void. Now to make God ſtand in the ſame Obedience to the Creature, is a great Evil: according to this Doctrine, Man can make void all God's Deſires and Ends that he hath, as to particular Perſons.

2. Things wherein Contempt is caſt upon the Godhead by this their Doctrine. *Bucer* affirms, that if any ſay there is any Good done which God doth not do, he denies God, for God is the Author of every good thing: But now there is ſome Good done, according to theſe, by the Creature, that is not done by God; for it is Man makes that Love ſpecial, which God made but common: This is a Good done, and makes thoſe Means effectual, which he did but leave at liberty, and at the Will of Man. Come to the Height and Critical Queſtion, Whether that which determined the Will, and caſt the Soul upon Chriſt by Faith, and chuſeth him, be any thing on God's part, or from it ſelf? If, as they muſt ſay, from it ſelf, he did it, his Will determined the Buſineſs; for that is the very thing we diſpute about: then ſome Good may be done which God doth not; if from God on his part, then we have done, the Cauſe is ours.

3. God cannot know who ſhall be ſaved and who not; as to the Perſons he cannot certainly know, for there cannot be in God a Fore-knowledg of that which is uncertain; but now nothing more uncertain than this, what the Will of Man will do: tho it hath the beſt Means God can give, yet it muſt

must be left to its own inclination most freely, otherwise the Nature of Free-will is destroyed, attending on them. Now to say God doth certainly foresee who shall be saved, is to take away his Prescience, and make him no God: But the very Light of Nature will shew you that God foresees all things.

4. The Love of God is wronged mightily: For what a Love is that worth? Little be sure that doth not save a Man from Hell effectually, that doth not effectually deliver him from the Danger he is in, whenas he could very easily do it. What Love had that Parent, that seeing a Knife in the Hand of his Child, and should know that his Child would certainly cut himself to Death, with the Knife would so wound it self as to kill it self, yet leaves the Child to it self to do as it will, when as he could save the Child from killing it self, satisfying it with some other thing as well as the Knife? Now surely God is able to make our Wills consent, and that infallibly, and yet preserve their Freedom, make us freely believe in Christ, as he is able to raise from the dead, create the World of nothing: What Love then is that which is spoke of? nothing but a poor low common Love that effects nothing. You see God is abused by this Doctrine of the Adversaries.

5. It wrongs the Soveraignty of God: He may not do with his own as he pleaseth, but according to the Law of distributive Justice. He is bound up to such a Rule, to respect Persons, to give what is due, to every one what he deserves: Mat. 20. 15. *Is it not for me to do with my own as I will?*

6. It wrongs the Wisdom of God: For according to this, Man is not made to a certain End: Now what wise Man is there but makes every thing he makes to some certain End? or else God makes Man to such an End as he cannot attain without his Good-will.

7. It takes off from the Grace of God; for he gives eternal Life only for a Life of Faith and Works: it is not Grace every way, and so no way.

8. It's against his Perfection. God wills that which shall never be, giving them Conditions with a Desire they all may be saved, and yet they are not saved: and that befals God which he would not have come to pass, viz. that any are reprobated and damned. Is this for God's Perfection?

9. It makes God changeable. God's Will was, that all shall be saved, and thereupon gave them Means, Preaching, and Scripture, or Light of Nature, helped by the Works of Creation and Providence; but upon their not fulfilling those Conditions of Faith and Perseverance, he casts them off, reprobates them: is not this then a Change, to love and hate the same Persons in a small time, to elect and reprobate the same Persons?

10. It makes God's governing the World, to be in Weakness. For his Government according to this Doctrine of Conditions, is ordered according to the inconstant Mind of Man: sometimes he hath this End, to glorify his Mercy if Men accept, believe, obey; sometimes to glorify his Wrath,

Wrath, when Men refuse; thus he is unready, weak in his Government: it makes as if God had not, without depending upon Man, determined from Eternity how his Mercy and Wrath should both be glorified.

11. The Omnipotency of God is greatly wronged in this thing; it makes Man stronger than God: tho God puts forth all his Power, yet if Man will, he can refuse and disobey: surely, if God really wills Men to be saved, and gives them sufficient Means, would not they be saved infallibly, if God put forth all his Power? or else his Power is but weak, he is not Omnipotent.

12. How can God be happy, that desires, and hath not his Desire satisfied and accomplished? he desireth the Salvation of all (say these) and yet hath it not: Happiness is having every good Desire satisfied. Thus the other Doctrine wrongs God, takes off from the Glory and Praise of the Godhead.

Motive 2. Take heed of the other Doctrine, cleave to this; if you receive the other, it will corrupt you in all the great Points of Religion, it influenceth you in all. When the Blood is poisoned, all the whole Body will soon be poisoned; so here: If upon Faith and Obedience Man is elected, 1. Then Man is converted by Works, and the Obedience of his own Will, and no Man otherwise converted. 2. A Man then is justified by Works; Justification follows Election, no Man is saved but by Works, and so all that Glory, and Beauty, and bright-shining Vertue of Grace which God hath manifested in the Gospel vanisheth, and comes to nothing: *for if it be of Works, it is no more Grace*; Rom. 11. 6. 3. It is then to bring in another Gospel, to bring in this other Opinion of Election upon Conditions: now there is a Curse upon any that shall bring in another Gospel, *Gal.* 1. Hear then, are you willing in the matter of Salvation to trust to your selves, and lean upon your selves? Hath Christ died and laid down a Price that you might live at your own Hand, and be upon the same Terms for Eternal Life and Heaven, as *Adam* was before he fell, in a Covenant of Works? Then it was, Do and live; and so now, Do this, *viz.* Believe, and persevere, and live. God hath given you Power to do this, so he did to *Adam*; he gave him more Power than you; for you are full of Infirmities, and Weakness, and Failings daily, but he was perfect and strong: Now is this the Gospel of Grace, to require as much of a poor weak fallen Man, as of *Adam* before he fell, who was perfect and not subject to Infirmities?

All the Duties thou dost, all the Acts of Faith, all thy persevering in good, being done for this end, that God may elect thee, they are but Acts of high Pride and Arrogancy; every one of them hath this Language in them, I do this, that I may be elected rather than another, and to put a difference betwixt my self and those that shall go to Hell: I do this and this, and elect God at first; and after I have walked on all my days to the

end

end to good Works, he will elect me; for this is the Condition he hath made of my Election: If I perſevere to the end, he will then infallibly and peremptorily ſet his Love upon me and chuſe me. Now thus God doth make a Bargain with Man, barters and ſells his Love, as *Laban* his Daughter, If thou wilt have my Daughter, then ſerve ſeven Yeers, or elſe thou ſhalt not have her: So doth God ſell Heaven and Glory for a Life's Perſeverance in Faith and Holineſs.

Motive 3. To make you take heed of this falſe Doctrine, it deſtroys all the Fruits of Election: if not elected till Death, then no benefit of Election in this Life; let us ſee the Fruits of Election, and how they are brought to nothing if Election of particular Perſons be made void.

1. Love to God is a Fruit; God's electing Perſons ſets out the Greatneſs of God's Love, and fills the Heart with Love to God again. Thus the Soul that hath any Intimation that God hath choſen him, ſaith, God hath paſſed by Millions, and ſome of my Neighbours, Kindred, Friends, and they are walking on in Ignorance, Evil, Unbelief; God hath called me, in which I read my Election; he hath choſen me before the World from Eternity, not reſpecting any thing that would or could be in me; for I was a Sinner in my Blood when he viſited me, and by this Love of his he will enable me to do whatever is required of me to Salvation. Who can think of this free eternal Love of God, and not love God again? God doth therefore in Scripture ſpeak of this peculiar ſpecial free Love, as an Argument to ſtir us up to Thankfulneſs. Deut. 7. 6, 7. *God hath choſen thee to be a ſpecial People*, and it was not for any Qualifications in them, *but becauſe he loved them.* Chap. 10. 15. *Only the Lord had a delight in their Fathers, to love them.* What, for any thing in them? no: Was it for fulfilling Conditions? No, it is over and over in *Deut* 9. *Not for thy Righteouſneſs ſake*; no, a baſe wicked People they were. And what could he ſee in their Fathers? why *Abram* was an Idolater, *Joſh.* 24. 3. and called. Now this free Love is brought as an Argument to preſs them to love God, and walk in Holineſs: *Deut.* 7. *Thou ſhalt therefore keep the Commandments and Statutes*, &c. *Circumciſe therefore the Foreſkin of your Hearts*, &c. *Deut.* 10. 16. *Deut.* 14. 2. you ſhall ſee the ſame Argument there, the Lord hath choſen thee, therefore thou ſhalt not do ſo and ſo.

Object. None of theſe Scriptures ſpeak of God's eternal Love, or of ſingular Perſons choſen out of that Love.

Anſw. The Text ſpeaks of Love ſhewed to particular Perſons, and how that ſuch free Love is a Motive to love God, and obey him. Now this Love that God had to the Jews, is a Type of that Love that God bare to the Elect. Compare *Iſa.* 1. 9. with *Rom.* 9. 29. *Except the Lord of Hoſts had left us a very ſmall Remnant*, &c. this is ſpoke concerning the Temporal Preſervation

vation of the Jews; the Apoſtle takes it and applies it to the Elect, *Iſa.* 8. 18. *Behold, I, and the Children whom the Lord hath given me, are for ſigns,* &c. this is ſpoken of God's delivering the Jews from their Enemies; the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 2. brings this, and ſpeaks it of Chriſt having all the Elect conſidered in him. God's electing Perſons provokes to love God; to think that God freely choſe thee from Eternity, thy Perſon, appointed for thee all the Means, hearing, *&c.* that thou mightſt be ſaved, bleſſed them to thee, and gave thee Faith then in the uſe of them; this is to ſtir up Love to God. From the other way let us hear how it promotes Love to God. God hath given Means to all, and left them Talents, and commands to improve and manage theſe well: Now what if any of theſe be ſaved, what may Chriſt ſay to them? Have not I ſhewed you great Love? ſhould not you love me? Yea, may it be anſwered, It was great Love to come in the Fleſh to redeem me from my Sin in *Adam*, to give me Means to believe, and Power to believe; but there is no more Love laid out for me, than for them that are in the Flames of Hell: Can theſe love Chriſt ſo well as the other in the other Doctrine?

2. This Doctrine of Election rightly ſtated, keeps one humble, very humble all his days. Election doth not take away Free-will, we have Free-will, but then, being called, it is to what is good: but it takes away glorying in it; *Not of him that willeth*, Rom. 9. 16. Rom. 11. 35. *Who hath firſt given to him?* &c. *He gives to will.* Not a Thought that is good but from him: Joh. 15. *Without me ye can do nothing.* As to our natural Being, *in him we do move.* So in the Spiritual Being he knits himſelf to us, he is in us as a Principle, then we act: We cannot pray to him for his Grace but by Grace. *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. Will not this make us humble?

Object. But they will ſay that their Doctrine of God's electing upon Faith will keep a Man humble, becauſe Faith is oppoſed to Works.

Anſw. Theſe Men need not bring this; for they hold that Faith, as a Work of it ſelf, not becauſe of the Object it receiveth, juſtifies a Man. Faith is not oppoſed to Works in Election, in Juſtification it is; but it is of no uſe in Election: Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is not accepted to make us elected; Election goeth before our Faith, or laying hold on Jeſus Chriſt.

Object. Yea, but Faith is the Gift of God, we ſhould be humble then.

Anſw. Is it ſuch a Gift as he that hath it offered cannot but receive it? and becauſe of the way and manner of God's working in him is he effectually brought to believe, yet his Free-will preſerved? then we have the Cauſe as we would: God elects Perſons, and works all the Conditions for them which he

he requireth of them to Eternal Life: But if there be any thing of us required at our Hand that muſt caſt the Scale, then we have to glory.

3. Aſſurance and Certainty of Salvation ſprings from Election. When the Scripture would comfort Believers with the Aſſurance of their Salvation, that they ſhould not periſh but go to Heaven certainly, it fetches the Comfort from the Fountain: The Decree of God taking their Perſons, the Conſtancy of the Decree of God, makes that Aſſurance which could never be by God's giving Conditions for Election, becauſe the fulfilling of them depends upon our own changeable and mutable Will. What Aſſurance can a Man have that is choſen under a Condition? For when he hath attained to the beſt degree of Grace in the uſe of Means, yet then may he ſay, this is no more than what may be done by him that ſhall periſh: For it is not the doing this, tho great, but the continuing to do this, upon which Election is grounded; and I may fall as others, and loſe this before Death: no Aſſurance this way. But in the other, as we have ſtated, Election there, is to take off the Fears of the Saints: when they ſaw the Jews fall, he brings this, and comforts them that they ſhould not fall; *Rom.* 11. *God hath not caſt away his People whom he fore-knew.* Ver. 7. *What then?* Iſrael *hath not obtained that which he ſought after, but the Election obtained it, and the reſt are hardened.* He tells you none fell that were elected. *Pſal.* 33. 11, 12. *The Counſel of the Lord that ſhall ſtand, and his Thoughts to all Generations:* then it follows, *Bleſſed is the People, whom he hath* [*choſen*] *for his Inheritance.* Iſa. 54. *With everlaſting Kindneſs will I have Mercy on thee.* He comforts them with the Decree, no aſſurance the other way. For it muſt be either from God or a Man's ſelf: from God it cannot be, he elects none but after all is fulfilled; not of himſelf, for his Will is changeable every moment.

4. The Doctrine of Election is a mighty Comfort in times of Sorrow and Grief: There are two things that are apt to trouble us eſpecially. 1. The Apoſtacy of Profeſſors. 2. The Trials and Temptations that we meet with in the World, *viz.* Poverty, Sickneſs, Diſappointment, Death of Relations, *&c.* Now in both theſe caſes Election comforts.

(1.) Election of Perſons: As for Apoſtacy, when they ſay, If ſuch Cedars fall, what will become of ſuch a Shrub as I? *Dan.* 12. he ſpeaking of the laſt Times how bad they ſhould be, yet adds, *and at that time thy People ſhall be delivered, every one that ſhall be found written in the Book.* *Mat.* 24. 22. he ſpeaks of ſuch perilous Times, that *no Fleſh ſhould be ſaved; but for the* [*Elects*] *ſake thoſe days ſhould be ſhortned:* In *Rom.* 9. & 11. the Apoſtle removes this Stumbling-block out of the way, when the Jews fell, and tells the Saints none fell but thoſe that were ordained thereunto; not one whom God fore-knew: when *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* fell, he comforts them with this; 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. *The Foundation of God ſtands ſure, he knoweth who are his.*

(2.) As for Afflictions of what ſort ſoever, there is Comfort in them from the Doctrine of Election; the Apoſtle in *Rom.* 8. 28. comforts the Saints with this, *viz. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his Purpoſe:* Calling here is Converſion, and that Power that worketh it, not any particular Obedience of ours following Faith. *Whom he predeſtinates, them he calls:* his Purpoſe here is not the Object of Obedience which God hath purpoſed that Men ſhould do; for the Apoſtle brings it to ſhew that the Call is not in our ſelves, but in his Purpoſe; they that are called are not called by any Obedience or Free-will of theirs, but *according to his Purpoſe.* But on their Doctrine, what Comfort can a Man have when he ſeeth another fall, that he ſhall ſtand by his own Might; and when he meets with Afflictions, that he ſhall be the better by them, when many ſtronger than he have turned aſide and grown worſe; ſome of as much Light and Parts as he, that were juſt at Land have ſunk, that were at the very Borders have miſcarried? He muſt ſay, tho I be now in a good State, yet what I may be is uncertain; Temptations have prevailed upon others, and they have fallen, I am not ſure till I have done all, and that is not till I go out of the World. But the other can be comforted that receive our Doctrine: God hath choſen my Perſon for better for worſe; and tho I be weak, he will enable me to do what he requires, and work in me all the Conditions, Faith and Perſeverance therein, will keep me by his Power to his Kingdom; he was moved by nothing to love me and do me good, nothing therefore that ſhall ſeparate from his Love ſhall be done by me: he hath ordained me to be conformed to his Image, therefore all my Afflictions ſhall tend to this, to plant his Image in me which he loves; Afflictions ſhall be as an Axe to cut off that which is ſuperfluous in me, and that Unanſwerableneſs to his Image.

5. Nothing ſo much quickneth a Soul to Obedience as the Knowledg that God hath loved our Perſons from Eternity, and will bring us to eternal Life infallibly. The Angels they are particularly elected, and how full of Zeal are they in their Obedience for God? they are ſaid to be *Flames of Fire ſent out to miniſter,* Flames for Zeal and Delight in their Service. The Apoſtles and Prophets they had the Love of God revealed to them, and that their Names were written in Heaven; and how full of Holineſs and Zeal, ſuffering any thing for Chriſt Jeſus, and rejoiced in their Sufferings? *Epheſ.* 1. 4. he ſpeaks of Love before the Foundation of the World to their Perſons in Chriſt, and what would this do? *that we might be holy and without Blame before him in Love.* John 15. *I have choſen you out of the World,* ſaith Chriſt, What then? *ver.* 16. and *ordained that you ſhould bring forth Fruit, and that your Fruit ſhould remain*; be conſtant in it: therefore is this Argument, *Col.* 3. 12. *Put on therefore as the* [*Elect*] *of God, Bowels of Mercy, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs.*

Object.

Object. But who will labour to be holy, and to walk in Holineſs and good Works, if God chuſeth without the Conſideration of theſe, hath no reſpect to theſe, and ſo elects that nothing can make it void?

Anſw. Tho Election be free, and without Conſideration of Faith or good Works as going before Election; yet none are elected but to that Salvation which is obtained through Faith and good Works; we are ordained to walk in them to Glory: Faith and Works are the Means of obtaining Salvation, tho they be not the Cauſe of Election; there is a great difference betwixt Salvation and Election: two Scriptures for this, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Elect according to the fore-knowledg of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience.* 2 Theſſ. 2. 13. *Becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth.*

6. The Doctrine of God's electing particular Perſons is a Ground to try themſelves upon, whether they be elected or not, and ſo find upon themſelves the Marks of Election: This is that the Apoſtle doth intend in *Rom.* 8. in giving *Calling, Juſtification,* as the Effects of God's *Predeſtination*; that even as a Tree is known by its Fruits, and the Cauſe by the Effects, ſo they may come to know themſelves to be predeſtinated. The Apoſtle ſpeaks expreſly of the Predeſtination of particular Perſons, for he ſaith theſe and theſe, and none but theſe: Whereas on the other ſide, if God only elect Conditions, then a Man cannot know himſelf to be elected in this World, there is no ſign of Election upon him, nothing is to be found in him but what he may periſh with; it is his Perſeverance when he is paſt all Temptation that God doth crown with Election. To conclude this with that Apoſtle in *Gal.* 1. 8. when ſome among them had preached Juſtification by Works, this is that which ſhould be noted to you, it is another Goſpel for any to look for Juſtification or Election by Works. *Exod.* 33. 19. God ſaith, *I will ſhew Mercy on whom I will ſhew Mercy*; he ſpeaks it of pardoning: The Apoſtle doth expreſly uſe theſe words concerning Election, *Rom.* 9. 15. whence I gather it is another Goſpel (and ſo a Curſe pronounced againſt them that bring it) to look for Election from Works, and ſo by Works, as for a Man to look for Juſtification and not by Grace. The Apoſtle ſaith it is another Goſpel; Why doth he ſay ſo? becauſe whatever way of Salvation we make, that will not reveal God's Love, nor comfort the Heart, nor be a Provocation to Holineſs, nor fill the Heart with Love again to God; it is another Goſpel, in that it will not have the Effect of the Goſpel, of that Goſpel that ſheweth Salvation to be only by Grace.

Uſe of Trial.

Try now whether you be one of theſe Perſons, for God chuſeth Perſons. To ſtir you up to the Trial, 1. You may ſafely do it, no danger either of

Deſpair or Preſumption. Satan hinders this as much as may be: *1ſt.* He tells us if we do it, there will be no end of our Doubts, but we ſhall come forth of this Enquiry more ſcared and amazed. *2dly.* Sometimes tells the Soul God's Love is equal to all. *3dly.* Sometimes gives a falſe Ballance to weigh the Soul, by ſome crooked Rule or other. *4thly.* Sometimes he puzzles the Soul with many Objections; it is dangerous, he caſts in this, to go about it: 'twill make one caſt off Holineſs, make one preſumptuous if he can attain it, and deſpair if he attains it not; that it is a Secret belongs to God, and that none can come to know it, *&c.* yet we ſay it is very ſafe to enquire into that which God revealeth, that we may believe it. Yet,

1. It is modeſtly, humbly, and warily to be looked into; our Heads will be dazled if we alone look into this Depth, as he that looks down a ſteep Place tumbleth with the Giddineſs that is wrought in him thereby: Many have fallen becauſe they have not looked aright into this Doctrine; if we follow the Light of the Scripture, there is no danger. It is a Secret, as is ſaid, as to the Cauſe of it, why one is choſen, and not another; but as to the Perſons it is not a Secret, for it is revealed, *Rom.* 8. Thoſe that are *called* and *juſtified*, as to Perſons that are adult, theſe very Perſons, and none elſe beſides them, are predeſtinated and ſhall be glorified; thoſe *whoſe Afflictions make them more conformable to Chriſt*, ver. 29. thoſe that truſt in him for Juſtification: ver. 33. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect?* The Levites might look into the Ark, and none elſe; ſo thoſe that are called, may reflect upon Election from whence this proceeds.

2. Take this Caution: In the Enquiry you are ſo to ſeek it as to advance the Grace of God in the ſeeking of it, without hindring the Work of Sanctification, ſo that Holineſs may not be hindered. Some do ſo look after this, that they never mind the other; yet ſo to look after Sanctification, that the Love of God may not be leſſened. The Works of God's Grace in thee, are not ſo to be inſiſted on as to think that for them thou haſt God's Grace of Election; neither is God's Election ſo to be thought on, as that it will ſave thee without Grace in thee: Grace inherent, is the Meſſenger of Election, a Stream from the Fountain, an Effect of it; where there is Heat, there is Fire. But why God ſhould work this in thee rather than another, it is his Free-Love: and the Reaſon why he loves thee and not another, was not thy Grace that was in thee.

Uſe II. Much Profit comes by knowing our Election.

1. Hereby we ſhall anſwer that great Queſtion that is in the Mind of a Believer, *viz.* Whether Chriſt be in him? 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Know you not?* he ſpeaks of ſomething known to all Believers, *know you not?* (*i. e.*) you do know, that Chriſt is in you: all Believers know this, that Chriſt is in them by Faith, except they be Reprobates. The plain Meaning

Meaning of it is this, *viz.* All true Chriſtians know this, that where God doth long afford the Goſpel unto Men, and it hath had ſome Workings on them, if they reſiſt it, and reſiſt it totally, there is reaſon to fear that they are Reprobates. Chriſt it's true may be in one, and he not know it; but all Chriſtians fear, that if ſo be Chriſt be not in them under the Means, that then they are not accepted of God.

2. We ſhall know hereby, that by every Affliction we ſhall be the better: *Rom.* 8. 28. the Apoſtle comforts the Romans againſt Afflictions, that *they ſhould be the better for them*; becauſe they *were called according to his Purpoſe.* Nothing will comfort a godly Man under Affliction, but that he ſhall be the better for it: Not the taking off the Afflictions, or Support under them; but it is only this that will quiet, that they ſhall work together for good. As a covetous Man is not contented to have his own, unleſs he may have Profit by it; ſo a godly Man is not content to keep his Grace under Affliction, except he grow better by it. Now this we ſhall ſee by knowing our Election.

3. Knowing your Election, you will be enabled to give God the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace: This Grace is his Electing Love: Thoſe that know their Election, their Hearts will be exceeding humble, for they ſee nothing in themſelves moving God to have a Love to them: this will empty the Heart and lay it low, and cauſe it to magnify Grace mightily.

Your Election may be known;

1*ſt.* It is an Act that is paſt, and hath a Being in the Will of God from Eternity; things that are to be known, muſt have a certain Exiſtence: Election hath, *he knoweth who are his*; and he knoweth who are his only, from his own good Will and Pleaſure: Rom. 11. 34. *Who hath known the Mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor?* Now Election upon Condition is from a Man's uncertain, fickle, ſlippery, mutable Will; ſo can never be known, and hath no Exiſtence.

2*dly.* It may be known, for it is an Act of God which he will not reverſe nor repeal, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *The Foundation of God ſtands ſure, the Lord knoweth who are his:* As ſure as the Knowledg of God cannot be deceived, ſo he cannot caſt off them that he hath choſen, *The Foundation of God ſtands ſure:* tho Profeſſors fall, and eminent ones, yet not one that was of the Foundation of Election.

3*dly.* It may be known, for God hath made known who are the Veſſels of Mercy; Heb. 6. 17. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the Heirs of Promiſe, the Immutability of his Counſel, confirmed it by an Oath.* His Counſel is made known to the Heirs of Promiſe by the Oath or Goſpel: 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 4. the Apoſtle ſaith, *he knew their Election*; and not by Revelation and Inſpiration, as he had the Doctrine which he was to deliver unto Men; but he judged of Mens Perſons by their Practice. The Apoſtle

Paul

Paul did ſo, *Acts* 13. 10. he judged him to be *a Child of Satan*, becauſe he did not *ceaſe to pervert the right Ways of the Lord.* And ſo *Peter*, Acts 8. 23. of *Simon Magus*, *Thou art in the Gall of Bitterneſs:* The Ground of it was, becauſe he thought the *Gift of God was to be purchaſed with Money.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Aſſurance of Election, putting himſelf in, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect?* Rom. 8. 33. And again, *Who ſhall ſeparate us?* ver. 35. He ſpeaks of Believers. How knew he the Theſſalonians Election by the Works he ſaw in them? 1 Theſſ. 1. 4, 5. *For our Goſpel came not unto you in Word only, but alſo in Power:* And by the Works of the Goſpel they might know as well as *Paul*, nay better than *Paul*, becauſe the Work was wrought in them: The Midwife knows that the Woman was with Child when ſhe ſee the Child, but the Mother that brought it forth knew it more certainly. He that eats any thing knows the Savor better by his Taſte, than he that ſmells the Scent of it. The Apoſtle judges by the Theſſalonians Works; they might judg of themſelves more certainly than he: he judged by external Actions, and they had the internal Operation in themſelves.

4*thly*. God calls upon us to be ſure of it; puts us upon it, engageth us to look after it: Now if it could not be known, then may it be ſaid that God diſſembles, which cannot be ſaid; 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Make your Calling and Election ſure.*

Object. But it will be ſaid, Many have been deceived, and thought they have had Evidence of it, when they have not; they have taken theſe things for Signs, in which there was no Light.

Anſw. Some have taken Braſs for Gold: Will it follow then that there is no difference betwixt thoſe two Metals? If Men have been deceived with falſe Coin, they ſhould learn to go try them at the Touch-ſtone.

1. If you will know your Election, it is required you ſhould be thoſe whoſe ſpiritual Senſes are exerciſed to diſcern of things: You muſt have a good Underſtanding of ſpiritual Matters; Novices will not reach this: Hypocriſy may be ſo finely drawn as that it may be taken for the Power of Godlineſs by Men that are good, and counted great Men.

2. You muſt have the Counſel of the Spirit, beſide your own Underſtanding; 1 Cor. 2. 11, 12. *None knows the things of a Man, but the Spirit of a Man that is in him; ſo the things of God none knoweth, but the Spirit of God: and this Spirit which is of God, is received that we may know the things that are freely given us of God.*

3. That you may judg aright, you muſt judg by the Scripture; not by Reaſon or Revelation, or external Privilege, or the Perſwaſion or Teſtimony of others, or the Perſwaſion of a Man's own Heart only.

First,

First, Not by immediate Revelation without the Scripture, as ſome pretend: Some think to know their State by Revelation; ſo ſome poor Souls cry out ſometimes, O if they knew they were in the Number of them that ſhould be ſaved, why then they would believe. They that hold that a Man is elected conditionally, if they hold that God doth know before-hand, who will do well and who will not; yet they muſt hold no Man knoweth his Election but by immediate Revelation; becauſe as none knoweth what he ſhall do at the point of Death but only God, ſo none but he can immediately reveal what he will do with us, and what we will do then. In theſe late Times ſome have made light of the Word of God, as a low Rule, as a Light in a dark Place, as a Morning-Star only, which withdraws when the Sun comes: they have been given up to ſtrong Deluſion, and they have ſeen (they tell you) Glory like to the Glory of the Son of God, teſtifying to them that they are in the Favour of God. But God doth not ſpeak now to Men immediately, but by Scripture: The Spirit makes uſe of the Scriptures now in this caſe; if we would prove our Election, it muſt be by our calling, and our calling muſt be proved by the Word of God, through which he calls us.

Secondly, Reaſon cannot give us an Aſſurance of our Election: For this doth not know, neither can know ſpiritual things; 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are Fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* Reaſon is led by Senſe and Feeling; and therefore biaſſed in Judgment.

Thirdly, Nor thirdly, You muſt judg of it by external Privilege: So the Jews thought, *Rom.* 9. becauſe *to them were committed the Oracles of God:* therefore if they were rejected, God was not true; they thought they were elected to eternal Life, becauſe they were elected unto the Means: but it is not ſo, for *many are called, but few choſen.*

Fourthly, The Teſtimony of a Church will not do it: A Chriſtian it's true is bound to take their Teſtimony as a Help to clear his own Caſe and Condition, and to help him to make a Judgment of himſelf, whether he is meet for Ordinances: This is to be taken as to the Judgment of Mens Graces, and it is a Divine Teſtimony; for it is an Ordinance of God, but it is not full and compleat; you muſt have other Grounds than this. Do not reſt in this, that God hath plucked you out of the World, and call'd you to a Church, and you enjoy Ordinances upon the Teſtimony of the Saints; but be as curious to know your Election from the Spirit and the Word, as if you were not of a Church.

Fifthly, It is not by a Man's making Judgment of himſelf from the Perſwaſion of his own Heart; for many Eyes ſee more than one. It's hard for a Man to walk ſo evenly as to eſcape the Obſervation of vigilant Saints, who walk with God, and have their Eye-ſight daily quickned by ſearching into

their

their own Conditions. In *Gal.* 5. 8. there were ſome we read of, that were perſwaded, that becauſe they did ſo and ſo, according to the Law of *Moſes*, therefore they were juſtified: now ſaith the Apoſtle, *this Perſwaſion cometh not of him that calleth you.* It is no matter what you think of your ſelves; you muſt have a Teſtimony from him that calls: ſo no matter what thou thinkeſt, or mayeſt think, unleſs God juſtify and ratify, and teſtify it to thy Spirit. Now the right trying of your ſelves ought to be done,

1. With much Juſtice and much Impartiality to a Man's ſelf: As in a Court of Juſtice a Man muſt not regard whoſe the Cauſe is, but the Cauſe it ſelf; ſo muſt a Man in the Judgment of himſelf. Allowances are to be given for the Degrees of Grace, and the Time they have been under the Means; but as to the Truth of Grace, the Perſon muſt not be conſidered at all. Sometimes when we fall upon the Trial of our ſelves, our Eyes are blinded with Anger; we have fallen into ſome Sin, and upon it there hath been a Spirit of Indignation and Wrath in us againſt our ſelves, and we are very jealous of every thing that Conſcience can ſay, or which our Ways do ſpeak: ſaith Conſcience to a Soul, Thus hath it been with thee ſometimes, *viz.* thou haſt ſought the Lord, and feared him above all things, his Love was better than Life; thou thought'ſt it a Burden to live longer than thou hadſt the Kiſſes of his Lips: Saith Conſcience again to a Man, Thou lieſt, through the Wrath that is in him: Why doſt thou ſpeak thus to me? How long ſhall I charge thee in the Name of the Lord, that thou ſpeak nothing but the Truth? Can there be the Love of God and the Love of Sin? Whatever I have done, it is no more than what a Hypocrite may do; and I am afraid it will prove ſo. This is a Judgment blinded with Anger. At another time we are in love with our ſelves, and indulgent to our ſelves; then every little is much, and every probable Argument a Demonſtration: and this is the Reaſon why Men miſtake; they are not in cool Blood, they are not equal Arbitrators, they look upon the Cauſe as their own, and not upon the Cauſe in it ſelf: Oft-times our Judgments are raſh and indeliberate, upon a ſudden Apprehenſion, without weighing and pondering of what went before, or what may follow after. The Rule in this Caſe is this, That therefore when thou haſt any Conceptions of thy ſpiritual Eſtate, that thou let theſe abide in thy Mind ſometime before thou paſs a Judgment on thy ſelf. Haſt thou any Thought comes into thee of the Love of God? keep it, nouriſh it, lodg it; ſit thee down alone, weigh it, examine it, conſider whence it took its Riſe, conſider what its Effect is in thee. When thou findeſt it came in according to the Manner of God's Working, and it works divinely and heavenly in thee, then let it be as a Decree, not to be altered. As Saints fall into Sin through Indeliberation, and want of conſulting the Matter, and judging by the Appearance of things; ſo they fall into Misjudging of themſelves and their Eſtates, becauſe they do it heedleſly and without Conſultation.

Object.

Object. But you will say, I have taken this course as near as I could, and yet I cannot attain to the Assurance of Election; the Word hath been my Rule, and nothing else: I have looked upon Privileges and the Dictates of my own Spirit and my Reason, when they have come alone, as lying Reports, in which there is no Certainty; I have laboured to set my Soul in as even a Frame as I could when I have gone about the Work, and yet still Difficulties have perplexed me, and puzzled me.

Reasons why we have not Assurance.

1. Thou hast, it may be, been unacquainted with the manner of judging thy self, and receiving the Witness of God; thou art in the dark as to this matter. And as it is with a Man that hath been in black Darkness, he cannot presently see when he comes into the Light: so here, thou art but newly come out of the dark, and art not acquainted with the Light, with this way of judging thy self, and having the Light of the Spirit. In 1 *Sam.* 3. young *Samuel* was unacquainted with God's way and manner of appearance and speaking, and therefore when he did speak to him, he ran to *Eli* thinking it had been *Eli*. Some of us are not well skill'd with these things, God hath been beating down thy Corruptions, struggling with thee, imbittering Sin to thee by Godly Sorrow; but thou knowest not what these Evidences of Eternal Life experimentally mean, thy Eyes have been upon thy Works and Doings, and thou knowst not what God speaks to thee; when God is speaking Peace, thou understandest it not.

2. Thou mayst want it, in that thou mayst be dallying, trifling with some one Corruption or other; it may be thou wilt not commit it, but thou wilt salute it; it may be it hath not actual, but it hath contemplative Commission, the whole Act is in thy Thoughts, tho not in thy Practice; there is a constant breaking out of Corruption upon all Occasions. Now 1 *Joh.* 1. 6. *If we say we have Fellowship with him, and walk in Darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth:* (*i. e.*) as when Mens Consciences tell them that when they lie they speak not the Truth; so when a Man goes about to lay hold on Assurance, his Conscience tells him he cannot be assured of his Election, who walks not sincerely with the Lord. A corrupt unprofitable Word will grieve the Spirit, by which ye are to be sealed, *Ephes.* 4. 30.

3. We want it, because we are not sollicitous to grow and encrease in all Graces, but only in some one; we neglect some Graces while we follow after others, we do some Duties not others, or all we know. If we would make our Election sure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. the Apostle tells us, *We are to give all Diligence to add to Faith Vertue*, &c. He reckons up all the Cardinal Graces and Vertues of a Christian, which comprehend all the rest, in which our Dili-

gence is to be, not one but all. We have prayed for it, no queſtion, but never joined Faſting to Praying; we have done both but only alone, never in Company of the Saints, that underſtand the Voice of God: it may be we have done this, but yet never waited upon the Lord in the Uſe of thoſe Ordinances which he hath appointed his People to walk through, and as Trunks by which he ſpeaks and conveighs himſelf. It may be thou art given to Anger, Paſſion, Frowardneſs, and ſtriveſt againſt it; but then art led, and not a little, by a covetous Worldly Spirit: it may be thou art againſt this, yet there is in thee a vain fooliſh Spirit, following the Cuſtoms and Faſhions of the Times, that the World may know thou haſt a Liberty. I do not ſay, that thoſe that do ſuch things cannot have aſſurance, but that the allowing a Man's ſelf in any one Sin, or the neglecting of any one known Duty, is the Cauſe many times that Aſſurance is not given.

4. Suppoſe that be not the Caſe, yet it may be thou takeſt not the Hints and Opportunities God gives when he would ſpeak his Mind to thee, or thou withdraweſt when he hath ſpoken a word or two, thou haſt made nothing of it: yet ſuch there have been upon thy Spirit, and thou haſt not regarded them; every Touch of God upon the Heart, every Intimation is like a Character, which is but a little Daſh, but it contains a whole Word: or like ſome Hieroglyphicks of the Heathen, a whole Story was comprehended in one Sign or Image: So if thou haſt been able to have conſtrued or expounded that Touch of God upon thy Heart, it would have told thee the Love of God from Eternity, and would have ſhewed how it hath waited on thee, and done thee good in ſeveral Eſtates, as in the knowledg of Duty. And if a Man would know his Duty, he muſt take the leaſt Motion and Intimation of it, and the leaſt Light muſt be made much of, if he will grow up to know the Mind of God fully. So it is alſo in the knowledg of our State, thou muſt begin with Principles to know thy Duty, thou muſt begin with Intimations to get Aſſurance: God begins after that manner with his People; whereas Preſumption is all at once, and comes by Violence.

Laſtly; If that be not the Caſe, it may be thou doſt not go on with the Trial of thy ſelf; it may be when thou art ſick or in imminent danger, or to do ſome hazardous Duty, then thou goeſt about it diligently, elſe deſiſteſt. Now Suits in Law hang long, come not to an end becauſe they are not followed. As he that would have a true underſtanding of any Science, muſt traverſe the Principles clean through; ſo he that would have Aſſurance, muſt go on the next day where he left off before. Thou doſt not make it the Work of every Grace and every Prayer to ſearch into thy Heart, nor the Work of every Day, but now and then when thou art in ſome imminent danger, or ſpecial Service. Let us know this to encourage us, there is nothing God takes more Pleaſure to reveal than

than his electing Love: tho it *paſs thy Knowledg*, yet, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Ephſ.* 3. Chriſt and the Spirit dwelling in thy Heart by Faith, will make you ſee into all the Heights and Depths, Lengths and Breadths, that paſs Knowledg: And tho it be the Weakneſs of a Chriſtian to analiſe and go from the Effect to the Cauſe, yet unto this Men ſhould endeavour and labour, that they come to know the Cauſe and Fountain whence all their Good comes: and God hath given you two Lights in this Firmament for the revealing of it; 1. Your Faith: 2. Your Love. As the Sun doth ſometimes make another Sun in the Firmament, ſo doth the Love of God work in us a Love of electing him again. That you may read all the whole Heart and Frame of God's Intentions towards you in the Reflection of your Heart towards him, make it your Work to *make your Election ſure*. He is a happy Man that knows the Cauſes of things, and he is the wiſe Man, that doth know things by their Cauſes. There is nothing more pleaſant and delightful than for you to drink of the Fountain; a little of the Knowledg of God's electing Love will be like the Spirit of Wine, like a Spring within you, like a ſtrong Motion. The Saints do much by the Power of Grace, but much more by the Power of Love, and eſpecially by that Love that hath ordained all thoſe things to be given ſo freely to them, even the Love of Election. And if it were for nothing but for this (that you may come to know your Eſtate) abhor Conditional Election, which puts you to work, but gives you no Certainty nor Security of your Condition but only by your Walkings, (as they ſay themſelves) which are changeable; and that Doctrine will bear it, that he that lived forty or fifty Years in a holy way, and all things ready to go to Heaven, yet hath his Will ſo changeable and ſlippery, that in one moment he may turn off from God, and loſe all he hath done, and never be remembred, but periſh eternally: were there nothing but this to make a Man ſtand at a diſtance from that Doctrine, it ſhould do it. However, it may ſeem to the Fleſh to keep a Man cautious and wary in what he doth, yet notwithſtanding, a Man can have no Knowledg in this World how it ſhall be with him to Eternity: whereas our Doctrine calls up to the Mount, and bids us there ſit down and read our Names in the Book, as they are made known by the effectual workings of the Spirit.

If you would know whether you be elected or no: 1. Look after your Faith. 2. Whether the Love of God be in you through Jeſus Chriſt. Beſide theſe I ſhall propound no more; for tho there be a great help oft-times in the number of Signs and Marks, as many Stars make the Darkneſs Light, yet it comes to paſs oft-times, that being weak in Underſtanding, and not well able to manage them, we are more perplexed by Number. He that hath many Notions, and is not able to maſter them, is but the weaker for them; ſo he that hath many Signs and Marks, and

hath not his Mind truly inſtructed, that is not able to go into the bottom of them, grows but into more Doubts and Perplexities: and as I inſtance but in two, ſo in theſe two, becauſe they are ſuch as are in all Chriſtians; every one that is born of God, believes on him and loves him. And I may truly call theſe two, to be as the two great Lights that God hath given to the Souls of Men in this Buſineſs; like the two great Commandments; all that can be ſaid on any other Head hangs on theſe: take what you will as a Sign, what Duty you will, if it comes not from Faith and Love; take what Graces you will, if they be not all turned upon theſe two Hinges, Faith and Love, they will give no Aſſurance at all: if you can find Faith and Love, you may be ſure there are other Graces, for they are never alone.

1. Faith is a Sign of a Man's Election, and that I take to be the meaning of all thoſe Scriptures which make Calling and Converſion to be the Fruit and Mark of Election, the out-going of Election; 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Who hath called us according to his own Purpoſe.* 1 Theſſ. 1. 4, 5. *Knowing your Election; for our Goſpel came not unto you in Word only, but in Power.* And Calling and Converſion is put ſometimes for Election, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. *You ſee your Calling, Brethren*; ver. 27. *But God hath choſen*, &c. All theſe prove that Faith is a Sign of Election. By Faith we anſwer God's Call; *He that hath heard and learned of the Father, comes to me*, Joh. 6. 45. The Goſpel comes unto Men in Power, when it is the Power of God to make Men believe, *Rom.* 1. 16. *For I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt; for it is the Power of God to Salvation, to every one that believeth:* the meaning is not, that firſt Men have Faith, and then the Word of God is the Power of God to Salvation, for that implies a Contradiction; he that believes hath Salvation, and a Power whereby he may come to Eternal Life: but it is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believes, (*i. e.*) by making every one that ſhall be ſaved to believe, whether they be Jews or Greeks.

But to make it more clear.

1. Faith is in no Perſon but one that is elected, that particular Perſon is elected which hath Faith; therefore the Apoſtle deſcribes Faith by the Subject of it, and calls it the *Faith of God's Elect*, (*i. e.*) the Faith which the Elect, and only the Elect have; *Tit.* 1. 1. Act. 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to Eternal Life, believed.* For the opening of which you muſt know that the Apoſtle doth not mean by ordaining to Eternal Life, Mens diſpoſing of themſelves, or being in a good Diſpoſition or Aptneſs to improve and make uſe of the Means of Eternal Life; and whatever be meant by ordaining, Faith doth follow upon it certainly, but it doth not follow upon Mens diſpoſing of themſelves, till ſuch time as Men do believe they are natural; and what can that which is natural do to that which is ſupernatural? We neither

neither by Nature are able to reſiſt the Temptation of Satan, nor are able to ingenerate in our ſelves a Principle of Faith, no more than a Beaſt can do the things of a Man, or a Man the things that belong to the Being of an Angel. By ordaining, the Apoſtle means God's ordaining, and they, and they only believed; ſo the words [*as many*] are to be underſtood. *As many*, he doth not mean, that all that were in that place believed, but only thoſe were ordained. Faith is a meer Fruit of Election, there had been no ſuch Grace but for Election; other Graces are neceſſary to make a Man innocent, other Graces come from God's Holineſs, and the love of his Creation. God cannot but make Man good, if he will make Man at all; but Faith comes from God's Love to ſave Man, and it is nothing elſe but only a Soul's repoſing it ſelf for Life (being guilty, and liable to Condemnation) upon God the Father through Jeſus Chriſt: this *Adam* had not; this God would not have beſtowed, but that he would throw a Cord from his Love for ſinking Man to lay hold on that he may be ſaved.

2. It is a Sign of Election; for where God begins it, he never leaves it till it be grown up from the leaſt degree to Perfection, till the ſmall Muſtard-ſeed become a great Tree. This is the Character of all things that come from Election, that God never repents of them; *Rom.* 11. 29. for the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance: he ſets out the Certainty of God's Election by this, God never repents of the Work of Faith: But he that believes ſhall have Eternal Life. As in Joh. 6. 35. *He that believes, ſhall never thirſt.* Ver. 37. *He that comes, I will in no wiſe caſt out: Every one that believeth on him, ſhall have Eternal Life.* Ver. 40. *This is the Will of him that ſent me, that every one that ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have Everlaſting Life; and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day.* Theſe words are put in, becauſe Men will be apt to ſay, Death and the Grave will devour, and how can this ſinful Duſt, ſcattered into all the Corners of the Earth, ever come to be Partakers of Glory? Take you no care for that, my Father hath ſaid, I have Power enough to do it, it ſhall be my Work, I will raiſe him up at the laſt Day. *Ver.* 47. he ſaith it, and he ſaith it with an Oath, *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, hath Everlaſting Life.* Rom. 10. 11. *For the Scripture ſaith, Whoſoever believeth on him, ſhall not be confounded.* So 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. *Behold, I lay in* Sion *a chief Corner-Stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him, ſhall not be aſhamed.* This might be brought as a Sign of Election, becauſe it is of ſuch Power with God, as to prevail with God for every thing; *Mat.* 21. 22. *And all things whatſoever ye ſhall ask in Prayer, believing, ye ſhall receive it.*

Object. If any ſay that the Scripture ſpeaks of many that believed, and yet periſhed; and therefore how do you ſay Faith is the Gift of Election,

and

and is only in thoſe that are elected? What was *Simon Magus*, and thoſe in *Joh.* 2. that Chriſt would not commit himſelf to them?

Anſw. They are called Believers after the manner of Men, not becauſe they had Faith, but becauſe they ſaid they had Faith, and made Profeſſion of it: That is the Language of the Holy Ghoſt in Scripture, *James* 2. 14. *Tho a Man ſay he hath Faith:* according to that Phraſe, if thy Brother ſin, and ſay it repents him, (*i. e.*) profeſſeth his Repentance: ſo Men ſay they have Faith, and yet it is but a dead Faith; for the Life of Faith is immortal and paſſeth not away.

Object. But I doubt whether I have Faith.

Anſw. By this thou mayſt know it, if the Goſpel hath come to thee *in Power, not in Word only*, 1 Theſſ. 1. 4. (*i. e.*) when thou cameſt to hear the glad Tidings of Salvation by Chriſt, which is the Goſpel-Doctrine, when thou cameſt to hear of the Love of God that is ſo free and large, and the Spring of all Good from God and of Holineſs in thee: theſe things thou didſt not give a bare hearing to, but they came preſſing on thee, as the things that muſt be believed, that were neceſſary to thee, and commanded thy Spirit. When thou cameſt to be in Affliction, thou couldſt truly ſay, if thou mightſt have thy Wiſh, it would not be to be freed from Trouble, but to honour Chriſt in Trouble; thou careſt not what Trouble thou haſt, ſo thou mayſt but get more hold on him: Tho thy lazy Spirit begins to be weary in toiling in the uſe of Means, or Suffering for Chriſt; thou counteſt thy ſelf vile and unworthy becauſe of it. This Work will prove thy Election to be true.

Object. But I have but little Faith, if any.

Anſw. 1. It is not the degree, but true Faith that argues Election.

2. Love alſo is a Sign of Election as well as Faith. Faith is our chuſing of God, ſo it is a ſign of God's chuſing us; thus our Love to God, is a ſign that God loves us. As the Sun in the Firmament by its Reflection upon a Cloud makes another Sun; the Seal leaves it ſelf upon the Wax when impreſſed; A Father begets a Child in his own Likeneſs: ſo Love in us is the very Image of Election. Love is but a Reflection of God's Love upon us: *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us*, 1 Joh. 4. 19.

How may we know that we love God?

1. God by electing us, wills us Good; ſo we by Love, will Good and Honour unto God. We ſay, O that his Name may be glorified, and his Will done on Earth as it is in Heaven! he longs for this, prays for this, acts for this, deſires nothing more than God's Glory to be ſet up on Earth, that all might honour him.

2. God

2. God by Election takes Pleasure in us, we by Love take Pleasure in God above all things; he saith, as in *Psal.* 73. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, whom on Earth besides thee?* He prefers him to all things; God is his Portion and Treasure, all things are Dung in comparison.

3. God loves us in Election because he loves us; he cannot but love us, so we cannot but love God. The Love of God lays a Law upon himself, Love puts a Law upon us: The Love of God is said to constrain, 2 *Cor.* 5.

4. God's electing is free, there is no Motive; so our Love to God is free Love. Benefits indeed to us are Motives; but Love is pitched chiefly upon himself, on his Holiness, Goodness, Truth, which are his Nature: Benefits are Motives, and they be the first in Order, but not in Strength and Worth: We come to love him at length more than his Gifts.

A word of Caution in the Close; That tho by these two you may know you are elected, yet one may be elected in whom these are not yet wrought. Election is known by Grace inherent; but Grace is not wrought in every one that is elected until God's time is come: Election is an Act of God concerning the Creature, not upon the Creature, as Sanctification is, and therefore makes a real and present Change. A Man may have a purpose to build a House a long while before he lays one Stone towards it; so God purposes to give Grace long before he gives it. God purposed to create us that are now long before the World was: So God purposed to create his Image in some Men whom he lets go on a great while in their Sins. Let not then the want of Grace make you conclude against your Election. Election, it's true, is to Qualifications, and cannot be known but by the working of them in us: but we may be elected and have no present Qualifications. The Signs of Election are given, that you may comfort them that do believe already; but you must not conclude that you shall never believe that do not now believe; the Scripture gives not Signs for any such end as that: It's true, it's said in *Joh.* 12. 39, 40. *They could not believe, for God had hardened their Hearts, and blinded their Eyes,* &c. That is dreadful, but mark, that you may not be discouraged; These Persons to whom God doth declare they are not elected, they were not Persons that only lived in Sin, for so do all the Elect till they be converted. Nor, 2. such only who had the Means, and yet not wrought upon by the Means: for God calls at the *eleventh Hour* in the Parable, *Mat.* 20. (*i. e.*) when they have stood out obstinately to the very last of their Days, going out of the World. 3. Nor such as despise the Means, the Word and Gospel; *Acts* 13. 41. *Behold, ye Despisers!* he calls to them, there is Hope. In *Rom.* 10. they sought him not, never minded him, never prayed to him, yet he was found of them. 4. Nor those that hate Christ and Holiness, for all of us do so by Nature. *Rom.* 1. 30. *Haters of God,* yet some of those were

were elected and converted: It is impossible, we being sinful by Nature, but that we should strive and make all the Resistance we can till it be overcome by the Power of God. Resist so as to overcome converting Grace we cannot, for we strive with one that is stronger than we; but to resist so as to oppose the Offers of Grace, that we cannot but do by Nature. Who that is evil can take Pleasure in any thing that is good? All these may stand with Election that I have named. I conceive in this 12th of *John* he speaks of them that had sinned unto Death, and therefore given up of God; they had sinned in Malice against God and his Word, and God in Justice revenged their Malice in giving them up. Therefore do not conclude against your selves, that you are not elected, but use the Means: altho the Means cannot bring you to Election, the Means show to you your Election; they are things by which you read your Names written in the Book, tho they are not the Ink and Pen by which they are written in the Book of God. Faith may come to the worst of you that are now in your Sins, and then you may know your Names are certainly written in the Book of Life from Eternity.

FINIS.